

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

§61.7

(b) Each person shall file an application with the Commission and obtain a license as provided in this part before commencing construction of a land disposal facility. Failure to comply with this requirement may be grounds for denial of a license.

§61.4 Communications.

Except where otherwise specified, all communications and reports concerning the regulations in this part and applications filed under them should be sent by mail addressed: ATTN: Document Control Desk; Director, Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; by hand delivery to the NRC's Offices at 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland; or, where practicable, by electronic submission, for example, via Electronic Information Exchange, or CD-ROM. Electronic submissions must be made in a manner that enables the NRC to receive, read, authenticate, distribute, and archive the submission, and process and retrieve it a single page at a time. Detailed guidance on making electronic submissions can be obtained by visiting the NRC's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/site-help/e-submittals.html>; by e-mail to MSHD.Resource@nrc.gov; or by writing the Office of Information Services, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. The guidance discusses, among other topics, the formats the NRC can accept, the use of electronic signatures, and the treatment of nonpublic information.

[73 FR 5725, Jan. 31, 2008, as amended at 74 FR 62683, Dec. 1, 2009]

§61.5 Interpretations.

Except as specifically authorized by the Commission in writing, no interpretation of the meaning of the regulations in this part by any officer or employee of the Commission other than a written interpretation by the General Counsel will be considered binding upon the Commission.

§61.6 Exemptions.

The Commission may, upon application by any interested person, or upon its own initiative, grant any exemption

from the requirements of the regulations in this part as it determines is authorized by law, will not endanger life or property or the common defense and security, and is otherwise in the public interest.

§61.7 Concepts.

(a) *The disposal facility.* (1) Part 61 is intended to apply to land disposal of radioactive waste and not to other methods such as sea or extraterrestrial disposal. Part 61 contains procedural requirements and performance objectives applicable to any method of land disposal. It contains specific technical requirements for near-surface disposal of radioactive waste, a subset of land disposal, which involves disposal in the uppermost portion of the earth, approximately 30 meters. Near-surface disposal includes disposal in engineered facilities which may be built totally or partially above-grade provided that such facilities have protective earthen covers. Near-surface disposal does not include disposal facilities which are partially or fully above-grade with no protective earthen cover, which are referred to as "above-ground disposal." Burial deeper than 30 meters may also be satisfactory. Technical requirements for alternative methods may be added in the future.

(2) Near-surface disposal of radioactive waste takes place at a near-surface disposal facility, which includes all of the land and buildings necessary to carry out the disposal. The disposal site is that portion of the facility which is used for disposal of waste and consists of disposal units and a buffer zone. A disposal unit is a discrete portion of the disposal site into which waste is placed for disposal. For near-surface disposal, the disposal unit is usually a trench. A buffer zone is a portion of the disposal site that is controlled by the licensee and that lies under the site and between the boundary of the disposal site and any disposal unit. It provides controlled space to establish monitoring locations which are intended to provide an early warning of radionuclide movement, and to take mitigative measures if needed. In choosing a disposal site, site characteristics should be considered in terms